You may separate the news sheet from the issue by tearing along the crease between the pages.

FRONT * UFO NEWSFRONT * UFO NEWSFRONT * UFO NEW
UFO NEWSFRONT * UFO NEWSFRONT * UFO NEWSFRONT *

* * * * * * * THE LATEST UFO NEWS EVENTS, PREPARED JUNE 30, 1977 * * * *

CHICAGO UFO CONFERENCE - An "International UFO Congress" sponsored by *FATE* magazine was held June 24 - 26 in Chicago at the Pick-Congress Hotel in commemoration of the 30th anniversary of Kenneth Arnold's sighting of flying discs. The general nature of the papers presented there was concerned with offering a general overview of the UFO phenomenon addressed to the lay public. Attendance was approximately 1500 over the 3 day period. Speakers included Ted Bloecher, Jerome Clark, Jacques Vallee, Stanton Friedman, Kenneth Arnold, Jim and Coral Lorenzen, David Jacobs, Ted Phillips, Dennis Hauck, Betty Hill, and Leo Sprinkle who spoke on a wide range of topics from humanoid sightings to the use of hypnosis to the history of government involvement in UFO research. There was uniform agreement among the participants that this congress attained its goal of increasing public awareness of the UFO problem.

CARIBBEAN GOVERNMENT CALLS FOR UFO PROBE - Prime Minister Eric Gairy of Grenada opened the Organization of American States (OAS) General Assembly on June 14th by calling for an international investigation of UFOs. Gairy said he was asked by the participants of the Acapulco, Mexico conference on UFOs to continue his efforts on behalf of the phenomenon. He asked the OAS members to support the issue when it comes up at the United Nations.

ORION'S BROWN MOUNTAIN LIGHT EXPEDITION - The specific objectives of the ORION (Oak Ridge Isochronous Observation Network)group's May 14-15 expedition to Brown Mountain, North Carolina were to observe the "lights", to verify that a light in the lowlands can be seen in the highlands over the top of Brown Mountain, and to confirm the hypothesis that light passing over the top of Brown Mountain is refracted. Use of the powerful marine spotlight employed by the group as a test light source did not conclusively establish light refraction over the top of the mountain, but the spotlight itself could be plainly seen from a distance of 22 miles! However, refraction of city lights, beacons, and radio and television tower lights could be seen over the mountain top and from the overlook in a highway where the lights are often seen, these known light sources resulted in a mirage effect which caused the lights to appear and disappear and rise and fall over periods of minutes to hours. Further experiments are planned by this group to confirm and amplify these results.

UFO MOVIE - IUR has learned the release dates of Columbia Pictures forthcoming movie *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, written and directed by Steven ("Jaws") Spielberg. The film will premiere at the Ziegfeld Theater in New York and at the Cinerama Globe in Hollywood on or about Nov. 1. On Dec. 15, the movie is scheduled to open in about 400 theaters across the country.

UFO ANALYSIS - *Of the seven remaining cases, all but one were ascribable to prosaic explanations.*

CASE	*TYPE*	*DATE*	*TIME*	*DURATION*	*WITNESSES*	*PLACE*
2-7-87	*NL*	*6-10-77*	*4:30 AM*	*15 min.*	*1*	*Deerfield, IL*

37 yr. old secretary watched a grey-white light source propagating dots of color

INTERNATIONAL UFO REPORTER T.M.

VOL. 2, NO. 7 JULY 1977

A MONTHLY REVIEW OF THE UFO PHENOMENON
REPORTS, INVESTIGATIONS & ANALYSES

"There is no hope of advance in science without a paradox."—Niels Bohr

RADAR/VISUAL IN ALASKA

UFO WITH "DARK FIGURES" IN CALIFORNIA

UFO or IFO? HOW IUR DRAWS THE DISTINCTION

6 UFO CASES SELECTED FROM 87 U.S. CASES: May 15-June 14

PLUS:

Book Review
Foreign Forum
UFO Profile: May, 1977
Latest UFO News

Editor-in-chief: Dr. J. Allen Hynek; **Managing Editor:** Allan Hendry

Published monthly by International UFO Reporter, Inc., 924 Chicago Ave., Evanston, Ill. 60202.

Copyright © 1976 by International UFO Reporter, Inc., all rights reserved. No part of this issue may be reproduced by any mechanical, photographic or electronic process or otherwise copied for public or private use without written permission from the publisher.

Subscriptions: $12.00 per year in the United States (plus $3.00 foreign), and $20.00 for two years (plus $6.00 foreign). All notices of change of address must be sent six weeks in advance and accompanied by old and new addresses. J. Allen Hynek, *Chairman of the Board*; David J. Baldwin, *President and Publisher*; Carl M. Teutsch, Jr., *Executive Vice-President*; Harvey X. Koloms, *Secretary/Treasurer.*

EDITORIAL

by Dr. J. Allen Hynek

A few readers have remarked (complained would be too strong a word) that in assigning many UFO reports to the IFO category, insufficient reason is given for such an assignment. The implication is that the decision in some cases may be arbitrary.

Such is distinctly not the case. There is good reason for such assignment in every case, but not only does space not permit such details, they would make for most uninteresting reading. Phone call after phone call to witnesses, to airports, to NORAD, to radar installations, to balloon launch facilities and to advertising plane companies is often necessary to establish that what otherwise would have been recorded as a UFO was indeed identifiable.

There are instances, however, when the description of the observation so patently fits that of a meteor or a satellite there is little point in spending great amounts of time in tracking it down. Even if this were done, little would be added to our research effort, the main reason for our existence. One more or less "light in the sky" will contribute little to our knowledge. Far better to spend time on the provocative cases, those which promise scientific "pay dirt".

I have asked Allan Hendry, who carries the brunt of the effort in tracking down IFOs, to discuss in this issue more fully just how IFO determinations are made. IFO determinations are tremendously important because they alone point up the existence of real UFOs, as counterfeit money indicates the existence of real currency. Only if we are *sure* that a given report was not the result of an IFO are we justified in calling scientific attention to the reported event. Uncritically calling a sighting a UFO is a form of wishful thinking, and will neither help research nor will it gain the respect of scientists and the public.

J. Allen Hynek

CORRESPONDENCE

In the May issue article on NORAD, FAA-type radars are dismissed out of hand for signal to noise ratio and command and control reasons. I certainly agree that FAA radars are almost entirely concerned with aircraft with transponders and would miss UFO s going by. However, in almost all the sighting reports given (in IUR's case analyses), reference is made to an absence of radar contact at airports near the sighting. In general, one would NOT expect such radar contact and if it occurred it would not be noted, and if noted it would not be reported ...so why bother mentioning it? Absence of evidence certainly does not mean *evidence* for the absence of evidence.

Stanton Friedman
UFO Lecturer

A good point, Stanton. Sounds like a good idea for a Commentary! See the back page of this issue for an extended reply—Ed.

IN CURRENT JOURNALS

PHOTOCAT—an advertisement of interest in the April, 1977 *Flying Saucer Review*. A new catalog that provides references to over 1600 photographs and movie films of UFO s, with associated physical traces, artifacts, and occupants. Available for $9.00 (including air mail) from:
D.P.R.G., 554 Goresbrook Rd., Dagenham, Essex, RM9 4XD, England.

BOOK REVIEW

SITUATION RED, THE UFO SIEGE, Leonard Stringfield, Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1977. Hardcover, 224 pp.

Despite the sensational title, this book does not fall into the category of exploitative, "scare tactic" UFO books. Indeed, the well-read UFOphile will recognize this as another marketing compromise that the serious UFO author often has to make with the publisher. The author, a veteran of 27 years of UFO involvement, presents (instead) a representative cross-section of some of the most interesting and "readable" UFO incidents of the past quarter century, and in a personal, narrative form. Stringfield's major thesis is that since World War II, the Earth has been the obvious target of an alien surveillance, and he attempts to prove this by vignetting hundreds of cases of direct "physical" contact between humankind and "aliens": abductions, physiological effects, electromagnetic disturbances, and in a sinister vein, complete disappearances, aircraft crashes, and other accidents following a UFO sighting.

Particularly of interest to the reader are the concluding pages of the book which chronicle Mr. Stringfield's personal investigation of the 1976 Stanford, Kentucky abduction (see IUR, Vol. 2, No. 3). The reader is allowed to share in the highly personal experiences of actual UFO investigation. Also, considerable space is devoted to the possibility of government cover-up and investigation.

All in all, this book is recommended for those who wish an informal, highly readable general history of some of the most interesting UFO narratives, personalities, and hypotheses of the last few decades. Available from book stores for $8.95.

FOREIGN FORUM

This is a representative sampling of UFO sightings from around the world. While we cannot exert the same degree of control over these cases compared to domestic ones, it is at least of value to see that the same characteristics are reported for this phenomenon as in the U.S.

CHILE: Arica, April 25, 1977. Corporal Armando Valdes and a patrol of six men were camped out at 4 AM. Private Rosales informed the corporal that 2 violet lights had landed, one of which was illuminating the area. At 4:15 AM, the corporal left his men to get closer to the source. The next thing he remembered was awakening by the campfire "feeling strange" after 15 minutes had elapsed. He had returned to his men, cryptically saying, "You don't know who we are nor where we are from. Soon we will return." He fell unconscious again and didn't come to until 7 AM. The violet disc, flanked by bright red spots, disappeared about a half hour earlier. In the morning, it was observed that the corporal's beard had grown as if five days had passed. Also, his digital watch had stopped at 4:30 AM, and the day indicator had advanced by 5 days! The corporal can't remember anything that happened in that 15-minute period.

SOURCE: A large variety of news services, including two translations from local papers.

COLOMBIA: Bogota, Jan. 21, 1977. Capt. Gustavo Ferreira of Avianca flight HK-1273 sighted an extremely bright white light in front of his plane, along with the co-pilot, flight engineer, and 2 stewardesses. They were 7 minutes out of the Eldorado airport at Bogota at 20,000 feet, en route toward Pereira, to the west. At the same time, radar operator Jorge Jimenez watched a target on radar at the airport which he said moved at 44,000 km/hr. in a zigzag motion. The plane crew watched it change colors and head south after three minutes duration; the radar operator also saw it cut "90 degrees to the south" at the same time. (NOTE: 44000 km/hour is 7.5 miles/second! Zigzag or not, this is awfully fast for something that remained in view for 3 minutes.—Ed.)

SOURCE: El Tiempo, Feb. 18, 1977. Translation courtesy of Carolyn Hayes.

COLOMBIA: Bogota, April 29, 1977. This case, involving a pilot who was allegedly blinded by a UFO in flight was first mentioned last issue. Further details are now known. The action was centered around the Eldorado Airport. The tower supervisor was Pedro Pizza, who told the press that there was no radar confirmation or other proof that the UFO existed other than the testimony of the pilot. The four rescue planes that were sent to help guide him down were manned by expert instructors from the Aeroclub de Colombia and Aeroandes schools. After a 30 minute struggle to help him down, the pilot was rushed by ambulance to the Sanidad Portuaria. Pilot Lopez was judged to be in satisfactory condition by the time he was examined by a Dr. Silva Morena. The UFO at stake was described as an oval the color of an opaque cloud, surrounded by red and yellow phosphorescent lights. This was seen after the plane started shaking and the instruments were seen to drop to zero. The plane failed to respond to the controls; Lopez felt a strong pressure on his ears and head. Yet despite what the instruments said, the plane maintained a level circle. When seen beneath him, the disc looked like aluminum, some 15 to 20 meters in diameter. When it rose up in front of him, he began to lose his sight. The tower proved to be skeptical of the incident; there was no radar contact, the rescue planes that rushed into the area didn't see a UFO, and the pilot was inexperienced, with only 39 hours of flying time. They said that the symptoms he experienced were of dizziness common to novices.

SOURCE: El Tiempo, May 6, 1977. Translated by Aliss South.

6 UFO CASES SELECTED FROM 87 U.S. CASES: May 15-June 14

HOW WE LEARN OF UFO'S: UFO reports are from news departments, civilian organizations and individuals all over the world, but most of our reports stem from the Center for UFO Studies' UFO Central Hotline. This is a 24-hour, toll-free telephone service for the exclusive use of law enforcement agencies, FAA agencies, planetaria and other formal channels. This gives us the chance to follow up *all* cases rapidly for first-hand information with unlimited long-distance capability. Other advantages include screening of the hoaxers Indeed, police who patrol when others are asleep are encouraged to fill this void.

HOW WE DEFINE UFO'S: Any anomalous aerial phenomena whose appearance and/or behavior can't be ascribed to conventional objects and effects—not only by the original witnesses, but also by analysts who possess technical qualifications the original observer may lack.

NL—Nocturnal Light: distant anomalous lights seen in the night sky
DD—Daylight Discs: distant disc-like objects seen during the day
RV—Radar/Visual: UFOs seen by radar and vision simultaneously

CE I—Close Encounter of the First Kind: UFOs seen within 500 feet
CE II—Close Encounter of the Second Kind: CE I's that leave behind physical traces
CE III—Close Encounter of the Third Kind: CE I with humanoid occupants seen

HOW WE NUMBER CASES: All UFO sightings will receive a three element number which will serve as a case "name". The first numbers refer to the volume and issue number of the edition that contains the case, and the last number refers to the order it arrived (example: 1-1-7, the seventh case of the first issue).

1—Confirmed Identifieds

These reports completely break down as having commonplace explanations when subjected to rigorous scrutiny. We have either correlated them directly to some stimulus present at that time or, at least, have judged them to be well within the bounds of contemporary knowledge. This month's IFO reports were generated by the following phenomena:

There are 7 recent cases still being investigated—the results will be made known in the news page.

Ad Planes	32	Missiles	2
Stars and Planets	16	Balloons	1
Meteors	7	Birds	1
Aircraft	7	Moon	1
Satellites	3		
Helicopters	3	IFO TOTAL	73

2—UFOs of Limited Merit

These reports are of intermediate stature. They are UFOs in the sense that we don't know what they are, but for a variety of stated *reasons, they are not really worthy of closer scrutiny.*

CASE	TYPE	DATE	TIME	DURATION	WITNESSES	PLACE
2-7-1	DD	5-15-77	4:30 AM	2-3 min.	1	Clarksville, TN

Man driving in car saw a distinct, round object with 7 or 8 blue/green lights flashing in the center. It appeared to drop 7 to 8 red "flares" flying southbound in a straight path. Seen against a clear dawn sky.
Single witness. Unseen by Nashville Air Traffic Control, Ft. Campbell, or Nashville Weather Service, either visually or on radar. Possibly observed by police officers at 4:55 (IFO #2-7-2), but very far away, with red and green lights, making it hard to distinguish from an aircraft.

2-7-15	NL	5-19-77	10:45 PM	7 min.	1	Clayton, N.J.

Blindingly bright, round object composed of many small flashing white lights packed together and 3 main lights in front. Watched by a 52-year old travel agent from her car; seen to hover for 45-50 seconds over telephone wires, the lights not flashing. Then the lights started flashing, and the object ascended at a steep climb northbound (toward Philadelphia).
Single witness, no additional reports. No confirmation from FAA at two Philadelphia airports. Possible ad plane, but IUR could not succeed in finding one in that area at the time.

2-7-22 CEIII - see Progress Reports, this issue.

2-7-25	NL	5-21-77	9:30 PM	1½ min.	4	St. Louis, MO

Family watched what looked like a "comet", a blue-white star with a long parabolic tail, move parallel to the earth at "aircraft altitude". First seen 45 degrees up in the NE, the object was lost from sight as it silently proceeded northbound below the treeline.
No additional reports, no confirmation from St. Louis Air Traffic Control, CBS-News, or the local planetarium. Possible jet with contrail—but it certainly wasn't a comet.

2-7-35	DD	5-26-77	8:45 AM	3 min.	2	Detroit, MI

Two adults saw 3 blue "teardrop"-shaped objects in a "V"-formation, each object being the size of a distant aircraft, against a clear, blue sky. The formation moved from a high angle in the north to a low angle in the NW, and hovered "like helicopters" for 60 seconds. They pulled out of formation and swooped low, regrouped, and climbed again in formation at a 35-45 degree angle; they faded from view high in the NW.
No additional reports. Even if these were helicopters maneuvering, one wonders why they weren't conspicuous to Detroit Metropolitan Airport radar, Detroit City Airport, or Selfridge Air Force Base. A check with the Coast Guard revealed no helicopter activity.

2-7-36	DD	5-26-77	4:10 PM	30 sec.	2	Dowagiac, MI

39-year old radio announcer and wife watched an eastbound jet reach the zenith (overhead). Suddenly, a brown cigar-shaped object, distinctly outlined, rushed from the rear left side of the plane to a position "one

(cont.)

plane length" behind it. The object itself was 1½ times as long as the jet. It followed the plane for 30 seconds or less, and then rushed ahead of it, going east, and was gone in 3 seconds from sight. No noise, trail, or wings were observed against the clear blue sky.

A provocative sighting, but IUR was unable to add substance to the testimony. The high-altitude area officer in charge of that air corridor at the Aurora Air Route Traffic Control Center in Illinois neither saw it on radar along with the plane, nor received any word from the pilot that he saw it. Nothing was noted by the FAA at O'Hare, either. Without knowing what airline company was involved at that specific time (it could have been a large business jet, for example), it's apparently impossible to establish just what flight that jet was in that busy corridor. Still, there certainly is no natural phenomenon that suggests itself here.

3—Progress Reports

RADAR/VISUAL IN ALASKA

IUR has learned of a sighting that could well be a match between a radar image seen by a radar approach controller at Anchorage International Airport and the visual sighting by a Northwest Orient Airline crew. At this stage, IUR has secured comprehensive information from a direct interview with the co-pilot of Flight 27 about what he, the pilot, the second officer, and the hostess saw the night of April 23. We are still waiting, however, for the completion of radar information forms from the traffic controller.

THE WITNESSES: Co-pilot Richard Drzal, 33, with 6000 flight hours, 1st class medical certification, and no previous UFO experiences. The pilot was William Sorum, the hostess was Kay Burrill.

FLIGHT DETAILS: Northwest Orient Flight 27 was a DC 10 en route from Seattle to Anchorage. At the time of the incident (9: 30 PM Alaska, 11: 30 Pacific), the plane was flying west at 39,000 feet above sea level and was 200 miles SE of Anchorage, or 50 miles east of Middleton Island. They were flying at a level attitude with a true air speed of 480 m.p.h. throughout the entire sighting. Clear weather, with stars visible from the cockpit.

APPEARANCE: A bright, white star, not as bright as aircraft lights. No trail seen.

MOTION: The light moved smoothly and uniformly from the southern "horizon" across their field of view to the northern "horizon". The time involved was "greater than 30 seconds, but less than a minute". When it passed in front of them, it did so at a 45 degree angle above them. The co-pilot thought that it moved too fast for a satellite.

DOES THE VISUAL SIGHTING MATCH UP WITH THE RADAR DATA? IUR is not yet in a position to say, as we only possess a limited amount of facts about the radar perception at the time of this writing. On the same night, flight controller Terry Siegrist said that he and several other controllers watched a linear flight of *four* separate unidentifiable blips suddenly appear on their screens at 30 miles distance east of Anchorage. The blips settled downward, then shot off to the east at a rapid rate of speed. They covered a distance of 10 miles in 6 to 12 seconds before disappearing; if the blips corresponded to actual objects, their speed was estimated at 3600 m.p.h. by one of the controllers. Once IUR has the necessary data on time and trajectory, we can establish whether or not a significant correlation exists between the two observations.

UFO WITH "DARK FIGURES" IN CALIFORNIA

IUR is in the process of developing a report on a sighting reported by three boys in West Pittsburg, California. We learned of this case via the Center for UFO Studies' Hotline, and were able to act upon it quickly. Although one local newspaper did reveal the names and addresses of the boys, the case still benefits from a rare absence of press harassment, and such; hence, IUR has opted not to report the boys' names until our investigation is complete.

ENVIRONMENT: On May 20, at 11 PM, the three 14-year old boys were out at a field near Bayview Avenue and Willow Pass Road, ½-mile from the Sacramento River.

APPEARANCE: They saw a saucer-shaped object surrounded by a row of white, rectangular windows that flashed on and off. One larger window (2 times the size of the others) was also described, as was a blue light that "zigzagged" near the object.

MOTION: The saucer hovered near the ground between the railroad tracks and the river. It shot across the river (about 3.5 miles) in a matter of seconds and returned equally fast, moving silently toward them and stopping 50 to 100 yards away.

THE FIGURES: One minute later, three figures were seen in the dark to be advancing toward the boys from near the lights (not directly out of them). They were dark human forms, about 5'6" to 6' tall, and were surrounded by mist. The boys could not discern faces, arms, clothing or details, just that they walked at arm's length apart with a stiff, limping walk. The boys ran across the street and looked back in time to see the figures slowly fade from view!

FOLLOW-UP: An officer named Pendleton spoke to the boys at 11: 16 PM. He told IUR that one of the boys was crying and shaking, one was upset, and another seemed calm. He also said that they did not appear to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

IUR got in touch with the following radar facilities within 24 hours of the incident: Oakland Air Traffic Control, Oakland Air Route Traffic Control Center, and Travis Air Force Base. We spoke to the supervisors who were on duty at that time, and none of them saw any unusual "traffic". The airport at Concord was closed at that time. No additional reports were submitted to the police, or the press, but this is not a heavily-populated area, and one boy recalled only one car that passed nearby. Taken at face value, the description of the UFO is very similar to those provided for low-flying ad planes seen at an angle, so to rule out this possibility, IUR contacted the two adplane companies that are usually seen in the Concord area; both established that they were not in that area at that time.

UFO investigator Richard Haines is working with the boys now. When a detailed report is finished, with durations and locations reconstructed, IUR will provide the details in a future issue.

STILL TO COME: The lab results from the analysis of the soil samples taken at the Gatchellville, PA physical trace site, more on the western Kansas abduction, and Ted Phillip's humanoid report from Ottawa, KS last summer.

UFO OR IFO? HOW IUR DRAWS THE DISTINCTION

by Allan Hendry

As mentioned in this month's editorial, IUR has avoided recounting the criteria by which we deem a sighting to be identifiable after the first two issues, in that we feared it would be rather dogmatic to do so; however, enough interest has been exhibitied in this topic that the editors feel it is time to spell out comprehensively exactly how we draw the distinction between an IFO and a UFO. This, after all, is the essence of UFOlogy. Needless to say, we don't get to study the UFO's themselves, only descriptions of them. This in itself can serve as a buffer between the original object and an understanding of its true nature, as we are denied the full sensory panoply to which the original witness was entitled, but we are not. Try this for example:

A bright, white light flanked by blinking colored lights hovered silently in the distant night sky at a low angle over the treetops. Half the size of the full moon in apparent size, it defied gravity for five minutes over the woods before gliding effortlessly northward and, executing a sharp turn to the west in three seconds, climbed upward into the clouds until it faded from sight.

Sounds pretty good, right? Yet an examination of the details provided shows that there is nothing in the description of the object's appearance and/or behavior that deviates from the capabilities of a helicopter (it *was* a helicopter, by the way ... I should know, since I filled out the report form myself!) So, obviously, it is of paramount importance to obtain a *minimum* of vital characteristics on appearance, behavior, location, weather conditions, witness background, and the like for every UFO report we receive in order to make certain that there is *something* substantial about the report that prevents it from being ascribable to some known, but misunderstood, phenomenon. Which brings us to

DEFINITIONS

The foundation for *any* decision made about a sighting report must ultimately rely on our standard definition of "UFO", adopted from the one employed by Dr. Hynek in his book, *The UFO Experience*:

UFO: Any anomalous aerial phenomenon whose appearance and/or behavior can not be ascribed to conventional objects and effects—not only by the original witness(es), but also by analysts who possess tech-

nical qualifications that the original observer may lack.

Consequently, an "IFO" is any aerial phenomenon reported to us as a "candidate" for UFO status that failed to live up to the latter part of the definition. While the actual percentage of UFOs to IFOs fluctuates from sample to sample, the IFO's always constitute the overwhelming majority in any given collection of "raw" reports. These are primarily generated when an unfamiliar effect is seen under nighttime conditions, but the descriptions provided can become distorted, as we shall see.

For many of the sightings described to IUR, the witness description reveals that he or she was simply unaware of the existence of a given natural or man-made IFO prior to the sighting. As an example, consider the most-often reported IFO category:

1-BRIGHT STARS AND PLANETS

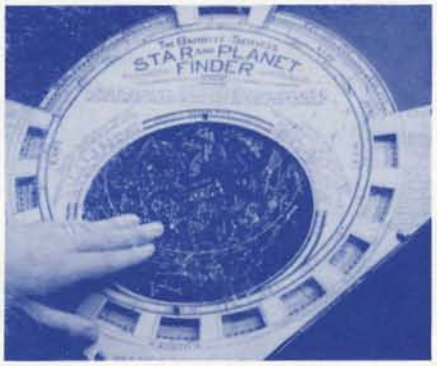
Fortunately, these are also the easiest reports to expedite. I still personally find it quite remarkable (as well as a statement about the TOTAL UFO phenomenon) that so many adults, and groups of adults, can observe a stellar body (sometimes for hours) and see fit to call it in as a "UFO". The effects that have confused the witnesses include:

"NEW" APPEARANCE OF BRIGHT LIGHTS—It comes as a surprise to many people that the positions of the planets change quite rapidly throughout the year relative to the "fixed" stars. Last February, for example, we saw the appearance of Venus in the west after sunset. Looking as bright as an aircraft landing light it "couldn't have been a star". Then it became less conspicuous until the reports abruptly stopped. Lately, it has become prominent in the east at sunrise, instead, giving rise to new reports (as well as newspaper articles).

FLASHING COLORS—Thanks to the astronomer's worst enemy, the atmosphere, starlight can be refracted into red and blue colors, or at the very least, the white light of the star will be seen to twinkle (scintillate) very rapidly. This creates the impression that the light is part of an aircraft, one that never moves! This effect is especially prominent when stars are near the horizon; sometimes, rising columns of warm air known as "thermals" can influence the appearance of one or a few stars leaving the rest undistorted.

CONFINED DARTING MOTIONS—These are illusions, of course, caused by a variety of effects. The most significant one is called autokinesis, and it's a psychological phenomenon. When a bright light is seen in the dark without a frame of reference, it can appear to "wander", though never much further than, say, 2 to 3 times the apparent diameter of the moon. This same illusion of motion can also be created by atmospheric turbulence, and faulty comparison to moving clouds. Of course, clouds can also be the cause of a star suddenly being obscured in the dark night sky without the witness knowing exactly why ("it disappeared suddenly along my line of sight").

HOW DOES IUR CONFIRM STARS?



Very simply, with the aid of an adjustable star chart, set up to simulate the positions of the heavenly bodies for a given time and date. If a suitable candidate can be found, the important question to ask the witness is, "Did you see a bright star in the same region as the one occupied by the UFO"? If the answer is "no", and the object is nothing more than a stationary point source of light that does nothing more than the effects described above, then IUR deems it a star, or planet.

A NOTE ABOUT OPTICS: It has been our experience that when an observer is watching a star undergoing atmospheric distortions, the use of binoculars, telescopes and telephoto lenses on cameras serve only to exaggerate the distortions and make the situation worse.

2—AIRPLANE AND HELICOPTER LIGHTS—

This is usually the second largest category of IFOs. In most cases, the lights of the aircraft are the only thing that can be seen at night, and the witnesses assume a shape for the object by connecting the lights (we never assume this ... the witnesses tell us). Also, witnesses are surprised at the duration that a plane or helicopter can be seen. Once in Buffalo, N.Y., an aerial exercise called for some helicopters to hold a stationary position for twenty minutes near an instrument marker! Other problems include seeing a plane briefly from a car *on edge* such that it looks like a disc (both day and night), surprise at not hearing noise or seeing both the red and green position lights, or watching a plane's lights go out creating an illusion of rapid acceleration. As you can see, the problem of dealing with planes and helicopters can be more complicated than stars as the witness can introduce *assumptions* about the appearance and motion of the IFO by "filling in" missing information, which disguises the true nature of the aircraft when it is verbally described and sketched for a UFO investigator.

HOW DOES IUR CONFIRM AIRCRAFT?

The most direct way is to contact the supervisor of the nearest FAA facility, to inquire about both the conventional air traffic at that time as well as any "unusual traffic" that might have been remembered, or logged, by the controllers. The key here is immediacy. If the comprehensive description provided by the witness does not significantly deviate from the capabilities of modern aircraft, or if careful questioning shows that the anomalistic elements of the report are confidently the product of illusions or assumptions, then IUR deems the sighting to be ascribable to aircraft.

3—ADVERTISING PLANES

I don't mean the Goodyear blimp, which has never generated an IFO sighting for us yet, nor those planes which tow banners during the day, but small, Cessna-type airplanes that have "electronic billboards" on the undersides of their wings. Three hundred individual lights flash out messages, just like the kind of signs you see outside banks. The trouble arises when the planes are seen at any angle short of directly overhead; then all that can be seen is a row of white lights flashing sequentially from one direction to the other, like the "chaser" lights on a theatre marquee. Often the red tail light is seen, too. Now if the ad plane witnesses described exactly what they saw, there would be no problem identifying these; yet this IFO suffers from "filled in" information more than any other. The *assumption* is made that the lights "swing around the back and start over again", i.e., that the shape of the object is a disc! Now ad planes do fly rather low, generally at 1000-1200 feet, and right on the edge of a stall to keep their speed down to a minimum, like 45 m.p.h.! So, as the plane comes toward the witness from the distance, and take a long

time to get there, he assumes that it is hovering. The mild aerial "stunt show" that many of the flyers perform to attract attention doesn't help matters, either, and when the lights go out on the sign suddenly, leaving only the plane lights, then the craft inevitably "shrinks into the distance at amazing speed".

HOW DOES IUR CONFIRM AD PLANES?

Because of the gross distortions introduced by witness assumptions, it is usually imperative that IUR contacts the local ad plane companies to establish that one was actually in the air at the time and place specified. IUR has pieced together a map of over 50 ad plane companies with locations and phone numbers.

4—OTHERS

Surprisingly, the above three categories account for the majority of all the IFOs generally received by IUR. All other IFO s show up only in trace amounts by contrast.

BALLOONS—There are three types that show up as IFO s. The most commonly-reported kind is the large, instrument-bearing, high-altitude research balloon. This is usually seen from the ground as a sphere or oval no larger than the apparent size of the moon. It's seen especially well at sunset and sunrise. The way we confirm these is by checking with the closest airports to see if a "highball" bulletin has been issued, cautioning them about the balloon. The next kind of balloon is smaller and quicker; these are launched at two specific times of the day by the National Weather Service. IUR possesses a map showing the locations of these launch sites. The last type of balloon is the hardest to pin down—the "prank" balloon, made from laundry bags and candles. Only once did IUR ever have the luck of finding out exactly who launched one; in most other circumstances, we have to rely on the description provided, the symptom of dripping, burning candle wax, and conformance to the prevailing wind direction. Remember that high-altitude winds may differ markedly in direction from ground winds.

METEORS AND RE-ENTRIES—IUR has usually been dependent on the nature of the description provided. Duration is especially important, here; it also comes as a surprise to the witness that the path of a meteor can take any angle relative to the horizon, including parallel. Re-entries appear similar to meteors, except they can last up to two minutes crossing the sky! The definitive way to tell the difference between a meteor and a re-entry is to check with NORAD in Colorado. IUR has encountered considerably more "natural shooting stars" than "man-made" ones.

SATELLITES—These usually commend themselves by virtue of description, but IUR has checked with Smithsonian schedules in the past where necessary. A common and well-known illusion is sometimes introduced into the observed motion of a satellite—that of an erratic wiggle. This has its basis in the way the human eye "tracks" their motion in jerks, and is related to the auto-kinesis problem mentioned earlier.

MOON—I'm surprised this shows up as much as it does, actually, but it inevitably is close to the horizon when it's reported. A simple check with a star chart in conjunction with a question about "seeing the moon at the same time as the UFO" will suffice.

LENTICULAR CLOUDS—This sight is indigenous to western states; IUR has had success in securing confirmation of their formation from weather bureau observers.

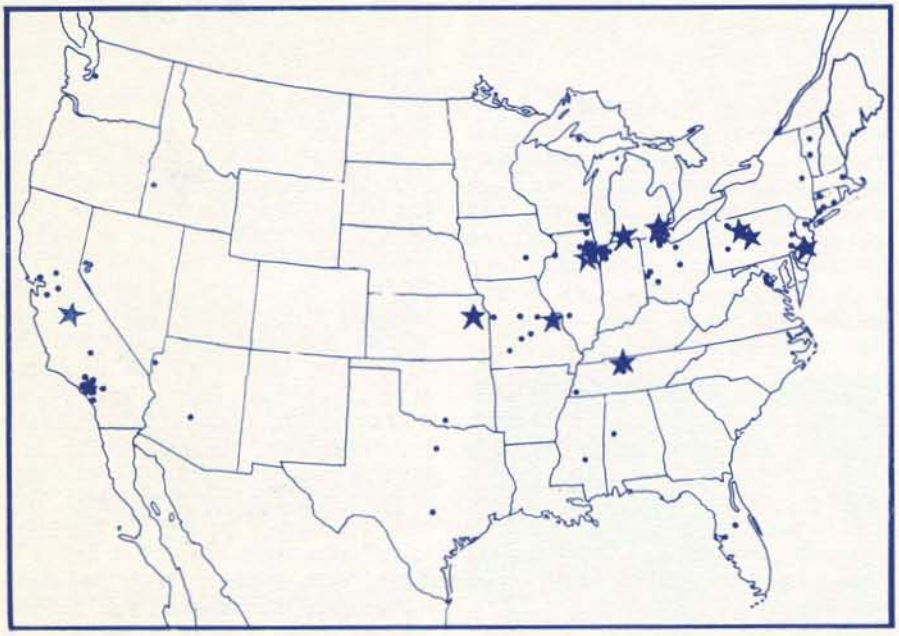
TEST CLOUDS—Launched from a few specific locations in the U.S., all of these are quickly suggested by the descriptions of huge but vague spherical shapes, and are easily verified by calling the closest launch sites.

Other rare events (birds, spotlights, flares, etc.) are usually determined by making sure that the details of the descriptions do not significantly exceed the limits of what these IFOs can do. The importance of securing as much information as possible becomes apparent here, coupled with the need to avoid leading the witnesses into false details not actually observed by them, but simply assumed.

Are these procedures too critical? Is the demand for substantiation too severe? What if something truly exotic (an extraterrestrial spaceship, let's say) looks and acts like a plane when it's seen in the distance? The answer to these questions is an attitude ... one that places tough demands on what is to be considered a UFO or an IFO. When you consider the very definitions of these terms, it becomes clear that their separate identities will always be based on *judgment*; we are not entitled to a clear-cut duality of roles based on laboratory tests, or purely impersonal procedures. So long as people are UFOlogy's "instruments", we can never depend on the details provided by our instruments as if they were gospel. When there are nine times as many IFOs and UFOs, we cannot rely on the "weight of numbers" argument for the validity of any given report. When people insist on reading *specifically* "domed disc" shapes (and few others) into, say, ad planes and blurred telescope images of stars, then we are faced with IFO "Rorschach blots". These inform us that an emotional climate publicly surrounds the subject, one that favors the existence of a certain model of UFO, and the desirability of finding one! It doesn't just affect an isolated fringe group, either; it obscures the objective judgment (on this issue alone) of all of those typical, ordinary individuals, young and old, of all occupations, that are reporting these IFOs as UFOs, and are reporting them poorly. In the face of such a sociological obstacle, IUR has adopted a policy of adopting tough standards about the cases it calls UFOs, even the ones that don't suffer from the flaws of the "limited merit" cases. The more a sighting description deviates from "IFO" characteristics, the more unidentifiable it is. IUR rules out cases with weaknesses and minimal substantiation so that the good reports that remain will be less vulnerable to the attacks of the skeptics. Indeed, the fact that the accepted *identity* of a given UFO is dependent upon the success of a pro and con debate is a perfect example of the tenuous state of the whole field. The existence of a chair, a bird, or a brick is *not* contingent upon a battle between "the defense and the prosecution". Thus, the tough standards. The more "resistant" a UFO is to identification after all the facts are considered, the more worthy it is of the label "unidentified". The more experts that examine the case (such as IUR's technical consultants) and remain baffled, the more it is an "unknown" quantity. Just cataloging away brief descriptions of sightings in the hope that future generations will understand it better is no substitute for investigating the case as completely as we possibly can, for only we in the present have a chance of finding out whether or not a case has a prosaic explanation. A badly distorted account of an ad plane can be resolved by called the ad plane companies NOW ... researchers 20 years in the future will not have that privilege.

Any further questions regarding IUR's criteria for the evaluation of cases are welcomed. Remember, IFO or UFO, we always keep complete files on both, and copies of these are available by writing to the editors at IUR.

PROFILE: MAY, 1977



• —IFO ★ —UFO

Ad Planes	31
Stars and Planets	22
Aircraft	9
Helicopters	8
Meteors	7
Balloons	5
Re-entries	4
Reflections	2
Satellites	2
Missile Launches	2
Visual Disorder	1
Non-UFO	1
NL	6
DD	5
CE III	1
Total Number of Reports	106
Average Per Day	3.4
Peak Activity	5/1, 5/11
Total Number of UFOs	12
Total Number of IFOs	93
UFOs: 11.4%	*IFOs*: 88.6%

Like last month, the ad planes were the predominant single source of IFOs. Most of the "Stars and Planets" IFOs were generated by Venus in the early morning sky in the east, often reported with Mars as a companion. The "non-UFO" was a case of a room momentarily lit up accompanied by a "zoom" noise.

UFOs include 2-6-53, -64, -65, -77, -79, -84, 2-7-1, -15, -22, -25, -35, and -36. Verifications and complete details of these evaluations are on file and available upon request.

COMMENTARY

FAA RADAR—IS IT WORTH IT?

by Allan Hendry
Managing Editor

This month's commentary is an extended reply to the letter on FAA radar on page 2.

There is little question that the radar facilities of the Federal Aviation Administration, applied as they are to the task of monitoring conventional aircraft traffic, fall short of being a practical surveillance technique for UFOlogy. The shortcomings are plentiful, and can apply to NORAD systems as well: targets that are too low for radar, too rapid to appear for more than a sweep or two, too stationary to pass the sophisticated modern systems that filter out "ground scatter" images, too similar to small, private craft in behavior to be noticed, or too erratic in motion to be taken seriously as anything but "noise". Also, transponder-equipped planes transmit back much stronger radar signals than any target not so equipped; indeed, it is an assumption that a given aerial anomaly need be "radar-returnable" at all!

—BUT—

...FAA supervisors do (and have) logged "unusual traffic" in their operational logs, and since the great majority of UFO reports do NOT involve physical traces, independent witnesses, or other forms of self-substantiation, the best thing IUR can do is to try and turn any good sighting into a Radar-Visual case if at all possible. It is absolutely true that an absence of radar confirmation does not disprove the existence of an alleged UFO, but in the face of the overwhelming IFO "blitz", and the high premium that IUR places on *substantiation*, it is important to show that in each interesting case, IUR at least attempted to obtain a radar record of a UFO's presence.

There are Radar-Visual cases in the UFO literature, and though they are rare, they suggest quantitative, depersonalized evidence of the seeming physical characteristics of at least a subset of the UFO phenomenon. Any one Radar-Visual case creates more impact than any handful of Nocturnal Light sightings. IUR may obtain but few R-V's from our procedures, but it's all we've got ... elusiveness, and high signal-to-noise ratios, are nothing new to UFOlogy.

P.S. Remember that Mt. Clemens, Michigan picture of a Daylight Disc taken by the Jaroslaw brothers in 1967 that turned out to be an admitted hoax just last year? Back then, nearby Selfridge Air Force Base stated that they had not seen the object on their radar, to which sympathetic UFOlogists replied that it was probably "too low" to be seen! "Evidence for the absence of evidence"? All it really means, of course, is that UFO reports without radar confirmation must remain considerably "iffy-er" than the sightings that possess this blessing.

(cont.)

which were drawn back to the source. This remained stationary in the low SW sky for 15 min., and suddenly shot off into the NW sky on a slight climb in a matter of seconds and was lost from view behind the tall trees.

Single witness case - no additional reports from police or press. No confirmation from local air facilities. Possible observation of Venus with incorrect direction cited.

COMMENT - A word on that Missouri flap -- IUR was made aware of a local outbreak of sightings in the area of Pineville, Missouri on or about March 23. Included was at least one nighttime encounter with humanoids and a number of close encounters involving car engine interferences. IUR had difficulty in gaining access to these witnesses; names and addresses were not available from the press, people didn't have phone listings, etc. Furthermore, the news of the sightings was not made public until a full month after the events took place. When investigator Ted Phillips arrived at the rural town, he found that the witnesses were hostile about the harassment they had received from the press and local UFO groups and were unwilling to discuss the issue any further. Still, if IUR can secure anything furhter on these provocative incidents despite the late date, we will inform our readers in a future issue.

KNOW A FRIEND WHO MIGHT LIKE TO SUBSCRIBE TO IUR ?

INTERNATIONAL UFO REPORTER
924 Chicago Avenue
Evanston, Illinois 60202

U.S. & Canada: $12.00/yr.
$20.00/2 yrs.

Foreign: $15.00/yr.
$26.00/2 yrs.

_____ BILL ME LATER

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____